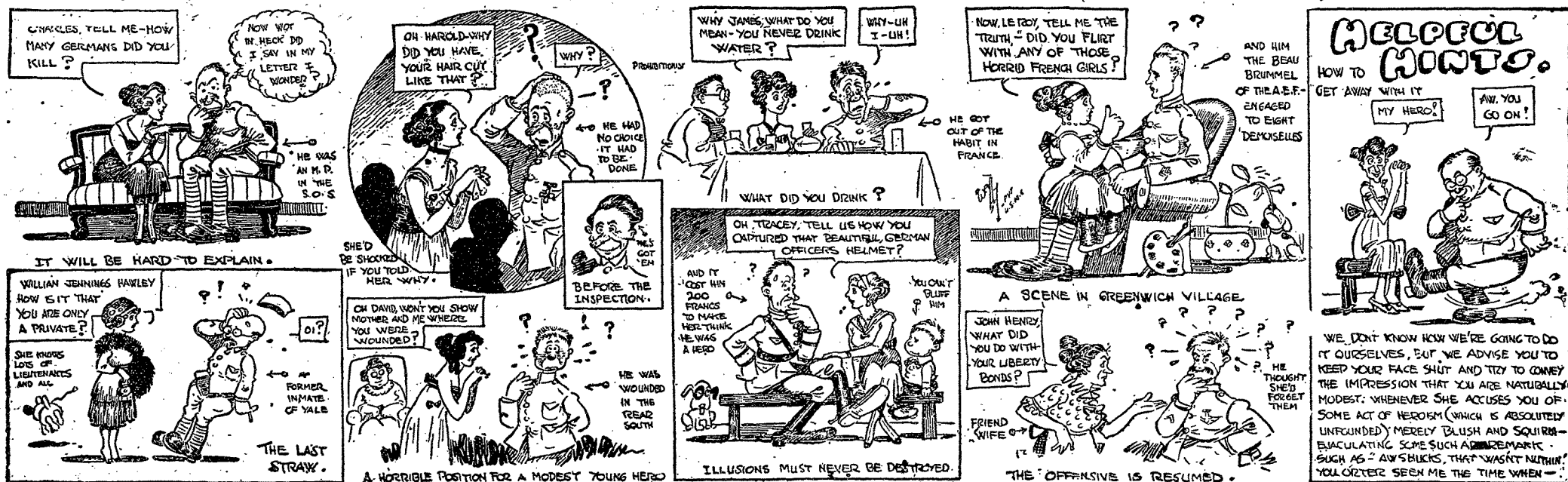


WHAT WILL YOU TELL HER?

C. R. O. AT BOURGES
PORT OF MISSING MEN

Many Mistakes on Casualty Lists Now Being Rectified

DEAD CAPTAIN PROTESTS

Clues and Suggestions Worked on Until Definite Information Is Obtained

The Central Records Office of the A.E.F. at Bourges is busy bringing back to life soldiers officially reported killed or missing in action. Mistakes, many of them excusable, were made during the period of hostilities in reporting and classifying casualties and transmitting them to the States. Between one and two per cent of the cases of "killed" or "missing in action" casualties are open to suspicion, and now a score or more of officers and several hundred enlisted men are devoting their efforts to ascertaining whether or not certain soldiers are dead or living and, in either case, to determine the whereabouts of their bodies or persons. "I have been death long enough," a certain captain remarked casually the other day as he walked into the office of the Casualty Department at the Central Records Office. "I want to live offically." In the records he was "dead." This, it was explained, was due to an incorrect casualty report. Errors in the transmission of names to the States, mistakes in reporting casualties, assumptions that a man is dead are but a few of the factors which create work for the men straightening out the casualties. When the bureau ascertains that a man reported dead may still be alive comes into this department, a thorough search is made for him, even though his whereabouts or movements may not be on record.

Letter Goes Home Late

Take the case of an Infantry private. His company advanced and one of his comrades reported that he had fallen before reaching the enemy lines. Before the report was received the wounded soldier was evacuated into a French hospital, where he remained for some time. Then he was transferred to an American hospital, where the first report of his casualty was made.

While at the latter hospital he died. Four days before he died an auxiliary war worker visited him and consented to write home and tell his folks he was "getting along splendidly." The worker delayed writing for two weeks. In the meantime the death was reported and cabled to the States. Upon the receipt of a letter dated later than the date on which the soldier died, his family requested information as to his whereabouts.

When such questions are forwarded to Bourges the work of the Casualty Department begins. Clues and suggestions are worked upon until some conclusive information is obtained—either that the man is dead, in which case the location of his organization is obtained.

Some clues are run down a day, others take two or three days, others weeks, but something definite is always achieved. It may mean interviewing half a company of infantry. It may mean keeping the wires of long-distance telephones singing for days.

A.E.F. MENAGERIE

Cage No. 1.—GUSTOS MILITARIUM (M.F.) Wild. Habitat: Station platform and dubious side streets; also bars after hours. Related to goat family in capacity for butting in, but not in odor. Some specimens have horns and cloven hoofs, but same is not true of majority. Diet: Passes and red tape. Can see in dark like cat, but doesn't have to if he doesn't want to. Numerous in northern and middle France. Markings: Red on neck and head, red and black on arm, with yellow belly. Travel in pairs, often mating up with native gendarmes.

Cage No. 2.—DIRIGOR HOMINUM FEROC (R.T.O.) Wild. Habitat: Dark lairs in vicinity of railroad stations, whence he dashes forth to prey upon passing troops and Chiefs de Gare. Does most of his prowling at night, when he is particularly ferocious. Diet: Casuals and Ordres de Transport. Markings: Red and white on arm, inky smears on forehead, hands and ears. Noteworthy for ability to go without sleep longer than any other known animal. Travels in circles and alone. (N.B.—This animal cannot be hunted down without use of tanks and heavies.)

Cage No. 3.—CLERICUS MILITARIUM (Company Clerk.) Wild. Habitat: Foul and unhealthy lairs known as "orderly rooms." Has shabby, bedraggled plumage, usually accompanied by corporal's markings. Diet: Payrolls and blanks. Dangerous to approach at time of new moon.

YANKS NOW LOLL IN
BATHERS' PARADISE

Artillerymen and Sanitary Train on Top of World at Neuenahr

MULES IN GLASS ARCADE

Cots Are Lined Up in Cabaret Where Wealthy Rheumatics Once Nursed Ailments

At Neuenahr, famous German watering-place on the banks of the Rhine, the 105th Artillery and the 117th Sanitary Train are living, to put it mildly, on top of the world. Asphalted streets to lull the sound of traffic, sumptuous hotels with oaken beds and covers of elder-down, thick heavy carpets and rugs, deep, cushioned chairs, defecatorial service by German waiters, sulphur baths prepared beforehand by German women and paid for by the German government, health-giving water to drink, a great theater in which to sit and watch the motion pictures, glass-enclosed shelters wherein to picket horses and mules and park guns—all these, paid for by Germany under the terms of the armistice, are some of the things which the twisting threads of fate wove into the destinies of nearly 2,000 Americans stationed in the Coblenz bridgehead.

Headquarters of the 150th Artillery in the Wyndham hotel. The administrative offices are in what was formerly the main offices of the hotel proper, and there are oaken tables and chairs, and steel cabinets which, once holding the bills and checks of some of Europe's and America's wealthiest men, now contain such prosaic documents as service records and requisitions.

Beneath Sprays of Holly

The officers live upstairs, having taken over some of the finest rooms and suites. The enlisted personnel sleeps on cots in what was formerly one of the cabarets of the hotel. Magnificent chandeliers swing back and forth in this cabaret, still bearing huge sprays of holly, and across one end of the room runs a stage, flanked on either side by two heroic statues of women, lightly—one might almost say diaphanously—draped, and bearing in their hands the cup that cheers, and the grape, the product of which goes into the cup that cheers. They greet the boys every morning, smiling with Mona Lisan smiles.

But the baths are the throbbing center of interest. Wouldn't you think you had penetrated to the innermost depths of Paradise if after weeks of arduous campaigning in the Argonne, the Meuse and other tough sectors, living in shell holes and trenches and dugouts, with no place to take a bath except in the great outdoors out of a bucket that you borrowed from the cook, wouldn't you think, then, that the product of which goes into the cup that cheers, they greet the boys every morning, smiling with Mona Lisan smiles.

And Germany Pays

There are certain bath days for each company, with daily leeway, of course, for officers and transients. From 100 to 1,200 baths are given daily.

Just one thing is lacking—soap. Each Yank must furnish his own soap. The clock tells you how long you have been immersed, and the thermometer what the temperature of your room is. In the days of German prosperity, when the elite rheumatic of all nations gathered here to bathe, it cost them three marks per capita, not to mention the 40 or 50 marks per diem expenses, at the very lowest. The bath costs only two marks now—but the German government pays it, in accordance with the clause in the armistice conditions whereby the enemy is forced to bear all expenses of the Army of Occupation.

Tough on the Wine Growers

There is a quiet-voiced (get it, quiet-voiced) first sergeant on the job who sees to the appointment of the rooms and tells you something of the history of the place, of how, way back in 1854, the vine-growers in the vicinity found, to their great surprise, that they were unable to grow grapes at Neuenahr; that the soil was tested and found impregnated with various chemical elements injurious to plant life. And he tells how, about this time, a farmer, digging a well, struck warm water that contained these chemical compounds in such profusion that its value as a cure was immediately seen and capitalized.

That was the humble beginning of the Baths of Neuenahr. There is in the water, according to Baedeker, as well as the quiet-voiced sergeant, bicarbonate of soda, carbonate of magnesium, hydric phosphate and lithia, and it is good for persons with "chronic catarrh" of the ment of the pulmonary and digestive organs, enlargement of the liver, diabetes, gall-stones and rheumatism.

YES, THE LEAVE CENTERS ARE STILL DOING BUSINESS

Great disappointment was caused at Aix-les-Bains, when the A.P.M. put out of bounds for two weeks the American bar opposite the casino. Mountains are good to see, of course, but hundreds of doughboys regretted that they wouldn't be able to tell the folks back home that they had seen the bullet mark in the painting on the wall made by a certain American years ago in target practice, a sort of a promontory happening to a tragedy that took place in Madison Square Garden in New York.

Almost every coffer's shop in Grenoble, Chambéry and Aix-les-Bains has hung out a big sign: "American Barber Shop," usually supplementing this with cards announcing "New York Hair Cuts" and "Hot Towels." But the petits garçons of the leave centers are taking more American money than the barbers.

Long ago, when the first permissionnaires arrived, some pioneer garçon discovered that the Yankee soldier would pay 50 centimes to have his shoes shined after scuffling around in the snows and rocks on mountain-climbing trips. Now there are always from six to a score of boys in front of every hotel and every amusement place—and they keep busy most of the time. They all use blocks and brushes that they carry with them, and they look as if they belonged in one of the wood cuts in "New York by Gaslight."

Private Wallace Niephing for almost a week was an A.E.F. Aladdin at Cannes. All alone he owned a million dollar casino, a hotel that was a palace, a club that was a playground of a king and several thousand acres of a beach promenade lined with palm trees.

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